

7. (New) A process for forming aggregates of a hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide comprising the steps of:

mixing the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide with water in an amount of 30-10,000 times the weight of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide to form a swollen dispersion of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide and

treating the swollen dispersion of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide with a homogenizer under a pressure of from 9.8-490 MPa to form a dispersion of monodisperse aggregates of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide.

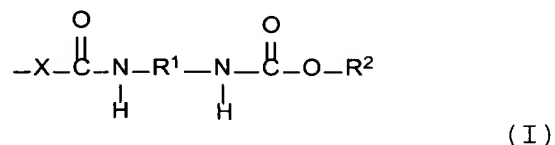
8. (New) The process of Claim 7, wherein the homogenizer is a high pressure homogenizer.

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9. (New) The process of Claim 7, wherein the homogenizer is a high pressure homogenizer which jets the swollen dispersion of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide under a pressure of 9.8-490 MPa from an orifice into a chamber to treat the swollen dispersion of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide.

10. (New) The process of Claim 7, wherein the aggregates of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide have a particle size of 10-30 nm and molecules of the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide have a number of association of from 3-20.

11. (New) The process of Claim 7, wherein the hydrophobic group-containing polysaccharide contains -XH groups, X being an oxygen atom or a nitrogen-containing group

represented by NY, Y being a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group of 1-10 carbon atoms, and 0.1-10 -XH groups per 100 monosaccharide units constituting the polysaccharide are replaced by one or more hydrophobic groups of Formula (I)



in which X is as defined above, R¹ is a hydrocarbon group having 1-50 carbon atoms and R² denotes a hydrocarbon group having 12-50 carbon atoms or a steryl group.

12. (New) The process of Claim 11, wherein the polysaccharide is selected from the group consisting of pullulan, amylopectin, amylose, dextran, hydroxyethyl cellulose, hydroxyethyl dextran, mannan, levan, inulin, chitin, chitosan, xyloglucan and water-soluble cellulose.

13. (New) The process of Claim 7, wherein the treating step is performed at least two times.

14. (New) The process of Claim 7, wherein the treating pressure is from 98-294 MPa.

REMARKS

The abstract and specification have been amended in order to correct grammatical and idiomatic errors contained therein. No new matter has been added.

In order to respond to the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 USC 112, originally presented Claim 1-6 have been canceled and replaced by newly presented Claims 7-14 which more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. No new matter has been added. With respect to the Examiner's query as to what the phrase "number of associations" means, the Examiner is informed that in the aggregates of the